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[A Journal of Culture, English Language Teaching & Literature ISSN 1414-3320 \(Print\), ISSN 2502-4914 \(Online\) Vol. 19 No.1; July 2019 Copyright © Soegjjapranata Catholic University, Indonesia](#) [The Power of Kalang Woman in Gender Equality \(Ancient Javanese Acculturation with Indian Hinduism\)](#) 1Prabani Setio Hastorahmanto, 2Sugiono Soetomo, and 3Agung Budi Sardjono 1Student of Doctoral Program of Architecture and Urban Science, Diponegoro University Semarang-Indonesia; 2Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Engineering Diponegoro University, Semarang, Indonesia; 3Departement of Architecture, Faculty of

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Abstract: Kalang is a Javanese sub-ethnic within the Kalang tradition, which is an acculturation of ancient Javanese culture with Hindu culture coming from India. In everyday life, the Kalang women as a mother have a central role in the household activity of being responsible to the husband and children's well-being. This cultural acculturation still exists in the lives of the Kalang people in Kendal, Central Java, Indonesia. In tradition, Kalang women have power in her position as a housewife, not in using her physical strength, but to demonstrate the ability to think, manage time and control emotions in carrying out the three household activities of 1) domestic, 2) tradition, and 3) social activity. In today's modern era, gender equality becomes the central talk of how the Kalang society places women within a family that is judged not through the material she obtains, but by her responsibilities.. Through a deductive paradigm with ethnographic techniques, the research finds how powerful a mother is in managing the family. because she succeeded in showing her role as head of the family, thus perfecting the role of men also as breadwinner, and in making her family life stable by continuously upholding the Kalang tradition. Key words: ewuh, Kalang, mantenan, obong, sonteng

Abstrak: Kelompok orang Kalang, merupakan sub-etnis Jawa dengan tradisi Kalang yang merupakan akulturasi dari budaya tradisional Jawa kuno dengan budaya Hindu yang datang dari India. Dalam kehidupan sehari-hari, perempuan Kalang sebagai seorang ibu memiliki peran yang central dalam aktivitas rumah tangga, peran tersebut merupakan tanggung jawab kepada suami dan anak-anak. Akulturasi budaya tersebut masih eksis dilaksanakan dalam kehidupan orang Kalang di Kabupaten Kendal, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia. Dalam tradisi Kalang perempuan memiliki keperkasaan dalam posisinya sebagai ibu rumah tangga. Keperkasaan bukan berarti kekuatan fisik yang dapat disalahgunakan untuk kekerasan, namun keperkasaan menunjukkan kemampuan olah pikir, olah waktu dan olah mental dalam melaksanakan tiga aktivitas rumah tangga yaitu aktivitas 1) domestik, 2) tradisi dan 3) sosial. Di era modern saat ini, dimana kesetaraan gender menjadi issue utama setiap kali membicarakan masalah perempuan, kelompok orang Kalang memposisikan perempuan (ibu) menjadi posisi sentral dalam keluarga yang memiliki kesetaraan gender melalui tanggung jawabnya dan bukan melalui materi yang dihasilkan. Melalui paradigma deduktif dengan teknik etnografi, ditemukan makna seorang ibu yang perkasa dalam mengelola keluarga. Tulisan ini adalah hasil penelitian yang dilakukan pada ibu sebagai sentral keluarga yang sukses menunjukkan perannya sebagai pilar keluarga karena menyempurnakan peran laki-laki sebagai pencari nafkah, sehingga menyejukkan kehidupan keluarganya dengan secara terus menerus menjaga tradisi Kalang. Kata kunci: ewuh, Kalang, mantenan, obong, sonteng

INTRODUCTION Women, in her position as a mother and husband's companion has an active role in maintaining the sustainability of married life. The responsibility that most women have is aside from the responsibility of being the breadwinner of the family. Being a 21st century women who can have equal opportunities with men, there are questions arising about whether women is given the position as heads of their families. Although the notion of gender is an inherent trait of socially and culturally constructed from men and women (Mansour 1997) with men considered mighty and rational, while women are considered gentle,

beautiful, emotional and maternal, in certain instances, it is the women's nature to be interchangeable in positioning themselves to be more dominant or not than men (Umar, 1999). Gender equality has a recognition for women to be in positions that replace men's domination in a family because women can have equal responsibilities as men, although physically, women are considered weaker in physical strength. The nature of women in the context of traditional life has several different meanings in each ethnic. Yet, it can also be generalized that women have the same responsibility of being a mother and housewife to any family. In Indonesia, the Javanese is a group of people who have the largest ethnic of having itself spread throughout the Indonesian archipelago. It is interesting to note that one of the sub ethnic group of the Java people is the Kalang group (Abdul, 2015), which carries out a different tradition on how women are positioned in their families. The existence of this Kalang group has been officially recognized by the Javanese Sultan, Hamengku Buwana VI in Serat Angger-angger (angger-angger document) in 1865. In Serat Angger-angger, it is mentioned that the Kalang are brothers of the Javanese who lived side by side in the Islamic Mataram Kingdom (Susilantini, 2014, p.52). In the document, there is no detailed explanation of what is meant by Kalang women, who are powerful. Powerful is not explained clearly in what way. However, in the quotation mentioned about the disputes a husband and wife of a Kalang family experienced in chapter 24, which states: "If the people of Kalang in the Sultanate are married, then the men will have a more powerful position than the women. On the contrary, if the people living around the edge of Gajahmati are married, the women will be more powerful." In the document, it is informed that firstly, the Kalang people are those who live and become Abdi Dalem (relatives) in the Sultan's palace. Secondly, Kalang people are ordinary people living on the edge of the river Gajah Mati. These people living at the edge of the river are considered sub-ethnic Javanese people. They have a strong, mighty, and harsh characteristics. Although these words are claimed to be equivalent to showing something that is considered to have more power – in this context, it does not mean that these people have physical strength, but instead they have the positive power of sustaining a family togetherness. In the Keraton or the people living in the Mataram Kingdom, people see the women as positive members of the general Kalang society. The Serat Angger- angger, issued by Sultan Hamengku Buwana VI (1865) has acknowledged the power of Kalang women despite having a different tradition from the Sultanate of Java which then became a role model for the priyayi, which is a term for the Javanese people who are considered to be in a higher class of education as they show better behaviour and politeness rather than most common people. Currently, in the 21st century, the power of the female Kalang is said to be still relevant. In the life of the Kalang group, who are within a middle and lower hierarchy rather than the high class of the Mataram Kingdom, some Kalang women still practice the traditions they inherited from their ancestors. Kalang culture is the result of the acculturation of the traditional Javanese culture that still accommodates with animism and dynamism with the Hindu tradition of India. The openness of the Javanese to new traditions and cultures, like the welcome for Indian Hindu shows that the Javanese people does not show resistance to other cultures (Khalil, 2008). The new tradition that is absorbed and accepted as an update to the beliefs of animism and dynamism provides an insight into the traditional life of ancient Javanese society. Kalang women in reality is not different from other women in Indonesia with regards to their lives in domestic, social and traditional activities. However, the Kalang women follows through several traditions that are routinely and periodically done, in order to give thanks for their safety and comfortable lives they and the family are receiving up to now. Having the Kalang tradition implemented in every individual family makes almost everyone in the group have a specific purpose of following the Kalang tradition. In their individual family

tradition, the Kalang people make time to show their thanks for a successful life stage, through the manifestations of sajen or offerings. In the big family tradition, they show their thanks in the show of a good relationship between family members with their creator and ancestors who have provided protection, happiness and prosperity through their yearly ewuh commemoration. In the Kalang family tradition, there is a responsibility to bring their relatives or parents who have died to be at their best for the Great Creator, by giving magical prayers through a burning ritual known as obong. In this ritual, it is the Kalang women that have the significant role in practicing the ritual, and reciting the mantra or prayers for the hope of a better life for the deceased and the family that are left behind.

WOMEN IN GENDER VS LOCAL WISDOM PERSPECTIVES

Gender equality is a movement that wants to recognize women's contribution to various aspects that are usually considered to only belonging to men. The existence of gender equality have increased the participation of women in various aspects of male-dominated activities, that consequently there are more various activities that are dominated by women (Bonney, 2007). Women with various abilities that are equivalent to men's abilities begin to appear without awkwardness, and are done well. The issue of women having an equal position with the men is not the ability to make women physically dominant and become manly, instead women are made dominant by still maintaining their feminine characteristics. Gender issues originally positions itself as a movement that raises the dignity of women in the eyes of men. The movement tries to emancipate women in various aspects of life that only men usually do. In issues of gender equality, most of the time people try to show the differences between men and women through their social roles, behaviors, duties, rights and functions that are imposed on women and men. Generally, gender issues arise as a result of a condition that indicates a gender gap, which deals with the systems and structures experienced by society (Herawati, 2013). A gender gap usually arises when a condition between men and women who begins to compare with the value of the income they earn. It has become a factor for gender gap, because there is the demand for the women to be equivalent to men in terms of the amount of money that can be obtained by the women. Herawati (2007) informs that a growing gender concept results from the social functioning of each individual that deals with new, more personal thoughts that tend to override the main task of what a man or woman should do. In other words, the concept or ideology of gender makes people fragmented with the meaning of man versus woman. In this case, women will try to be equal with men and may forget their basic nature as women, who provides assistance in the background. The gender equality concept has thus, an impact that reduces an individual's responsibility, which leads to injustice in men and women's resources in terms of carrying out their responsibilities, recipient of wages and the recognition of their respective contributions in society. However, if looking at the local culture in Indonesia, women are positioned already with men in equal portions of responsibility and recognition of their respective contributions, while the differences in wages do not trouble the relationship matter in terms of economics (Herawati, 2007). Gender equality in the Indonesian culture is, therefore, not about what women should be able to do in carrying out men's work but what women could do in complementing men's work. Most Indonesian women will position themselves for jobs that are not difficult and do not require physical power, thereby, it means that whatever job they undertake, they do them in support of their male partners. The same kind of responsibility occurs if women or men are given different job portions. The Indonesian cultural sphere of justified equality for both men and women shows that culture becomes a grip to establish proportionally. Indeed, the roots of injustice that have occurred so far may derive from the practice of policies and programs of development that is more prominent in men, and where women's position is still associated with

domestic activities (Marhaeni, 2008). However, if we look at some local wisdom that positions women in equal proportion to men, in Indonesia, it is found that there has been a gender equality that has been believed to be a gender-based division of responsibilities in folklores such as the Goddess Dewi Sri story. Women like Dewi Sri has been shown in the Indonesian culture as having an essential role for providing a source of life for the sustenance of all human's lives. Dewi Sri is a goddess believed by the Javanese-Indonesians, as the one who provides the force for rice fields to continually grow. With continuous rice available for Java citizens, due to the blessings from Goddess Dewi Sri, it entails that the Javanese people will continue to survive as rice becomes the main staple of food for the Javanese people's lives. Dewi Sri is not only the Goddess of rice, she is also the agriculture Goddess and Goddess of fertility. The glorification and worship of Dewi Sri for the successful crops of the Javanese and Balinese rice fields has been evident since the pre-Hindu times to pre-Islamic times on the island of Java. As a Goddess, Dewi Sri is one who is considered or believed to be a subtle human being, who is in charge of nature and the existence of men. Dewi Sri is not only a protector of birth and life, she is also the one in control for food, especially rice, as the main staple food for the Javanese and Balinese society. In the Majapahit Kingdom, Dewi Sri is married to Sadana. Sadana in the Javanese myth is someone who gives way to people's lives' meanings. Thus, with Sadana, Dewi Sri makes possible for people's lives to achieve the dream of living a comfortable life with the abundance of rice as the main food for human's survival. The local myth of Bathari Dewi Sri and Bathara Sadana, who is the God and Goddess in charge of giving good fortune to humanity has influenced the writing of the Javanese numerology, or calculation of the Mangsa Saddha. Mangsa Saddha, which is the counting days of special Javanese events is a way of finding the best day for acquiring the best prosperity someone can have. The myth of Dewi Sri shows that women can have an equal position with men in different job portions. With the ability for both Dewi Sri and Saddana as wife and husband to control human life from birth, to control food, to control happiness and prosperity, they have become role models for the Javanese people. Having the woman (Sri) working side by side with her man (Sadana) becomes an example of how people's household can achieve happiness and prosperity, in addition to a woman's responsibility of giving birth to children in a family (Jajang, 2014). Women's performance and interactiveness in the Javanese society is, thus defined by their immediate society. It is this kind reference that makes Javanese women comfortably continue to do what is deemed customary for women in order to be positioned in where they are (Rohmana, 2014). The Indonesian archipelago, which has many tribes has provided specific characteristics that indicate people's identities. In identity, there is a show of distinction among the several Indonesian tribes that have unique culture, language, and tradition that are inherited from their ancestors. There is, however, a similarity that arises from the various tribes in Indonesia and the position of men in general; i.e. the patriarchal system of the society, which assumes that men have a higher position than women (Sakina, 2017). In the Javanese culture of the 18th century, however, women in the general society and the government of the Mataram kingdom, is shown to be a *kanca wingking* (a friend in the back part of the house), with responsibilities of becoming a friend to their husbands in managing household affairs. These affairs are the taking care of the children, doing the cooking, and washing the clothes of the family. Although women are equally managers with their men or husbands in their own households, a number of Javanese expressions have tended to demean the women's importance. A Javanese expression, which states that a wife must have the cleverness to *manak, macak, masak*, which means that a wife should be able to give birth and have the cleverness to take care of their children, know how to dress them up well, and cook deliciously well also gives identity to how and where women are positioned as being submissive to

the men in their households. This is the reason why later on, in the ruling empire of the island of Java, people began to think of the differences between men and women as following the patriarchal definition of the world's men versus women's position. However, the Javanese expression for women to go to Neraka Katut, Suwarga Nunut, which means when entering hell the women got carried in, and when entering paradise the women follows with the men ascertains that women have the equal opportunity as their men to go to either hell or heaven. This means that women do not necessarily become in contradiction but have the distinction to complement the men in order to enable the formation of a harmonious relationship in the family to build an orderly society. The gender equality between Javanese women and men is also confirmed in the Javanese expression of sak iyeg sak eka kapti, which means that as human beings, the Javanese people are assigned with equal responsibilities. The similarity of responsibility between the masculine and feminine that makes a balance on each Javanese individual gives the possibility for each human being to develop their own personality optimally (Uyun, 2012). Just like the concept of androgyny, where men not only develop aggressiveness and strength in order to be seen as masculine characters, they are only complete as a human being if they also develop their feminine characters when needed. Consequently, in similar terms, women should develop their feminine characteristics but also develop their masculine rationality and independentness. The role of androgyny in the Javanese culture, therefore, is not only to demand the equal rights between men and women but also to develop themselves into the required character when needed. A balance between masculinity and femininity is a good thing to have in order to avoid being forced into different activities required by responsibilities brought by gender differences (Kaplan, 1979).

KALANG TRADITION: AN ACCULTURATION OF ANCIENT JAVANESE AND HINDU INDIA

Acculturation is a social process in society that can create new cultures that benefit people's lives. The process of acculturation of two cultures takes on a long process because there are psychological changes that occur between two or more cultural groups. At the group level, there are also changes met in the social structure and cultural practices (Berry, 2005). Social and cultural changes also occurred in the Kalang Javanese group who had settled in Java before accepting the Indian's culture. The arrival of the Indian people brings with them their beliefs, hierarchies, and government systems that later mingle with the ancient Javanese society (Muslimin, 2012). The presence of the Indian nation affected the social changes of the ancient Javanese cultural systems, religion, community organisations, knowledge systems, existing tools of technology and art. The melting and reciprocal cultural blend created a new culture known as the Kalang tradition. Kalang people are found in Kendal district, of Central Java. Kalang is a tradition, that existed through the process of acculturation between native Javanese and the Hindu culture that came from India around the 2nd century AD. The original inhabitants before the 2nd century AD had the belief of animism and dynamism. Although it has been a long time since the 2nd century AD until the development of technology and information in the 20th century AD, Kalang groups still carry on the traditions passed on from their ancestors. These traditions include the tradition of Ewuh and Obong tradition. These two traditions are periodic even though they have embraced Islam as a way of life. The understanding of the Kalang group of religions and traditions has strengthened its faith to carry out the Ewuh and Obong traditions, which are celebrated in every Javanese family.

A. Ewuh tradition: A ritual of gratitude to the ancestors

The ewuh tradition is a tradition carried out by the Kalang people within each Javanese nuclear family, which consists of a father, mother, son and/or daughter, who is in one house. The family carries out the tradition of ewuh as a form of gratitude to their ancestors. From observations and interview, it is found that this tradition was actually addressed to the Demang, who was an ancestral village leader. The tradition is carried out every weton (birth

day) of the first Demang, which was born on Tuesday Wage, while the second Demang was born on Friday Wage. The calculation of the ewuh day tradition is every two times of every seven months and two times of every five months, so that in one year will be held four times of ewuh tradition. The implementation of ewuh tradition is the form of offerings, which consists of a combination of: 1) Kebon (garden), 2) Makaryo (work), and 3) Peken (market). The three sources become one in a pawon (kitchen) room to be given a mantra (prayer), that is recited by the mother of a family. All of these are processed and arranged on anamben (bed). In the offerings there are: 1) Pawon (kitchen) furnace; 2) lumbung (rice granary); 3) Lawang (main door); 4) Pawon room (kitchen); and 5) Gentong banyu (a container mad from clay that stores water). After the mother finished saying her mantra, the offerings can be eaten by the family members or anyone who wants to enjoy the food. As can be learned here, the ewuh tradition, places a woman (the mother) to be agile in carrying out and preparing all offerings ranging from the selection of the ingredients, preparations for the cooking of the meals, , arrangement of the cooked meals, and reciting the mantras. Carrying out rituals and saying the mantras to give peace to the spirits are done by the mother of the Kalang family. The power of a mother is seen starting at dawn at around 03.00 a.m, where the whole series of the ewuh tradition started with the husband and children still sleeping. The tradition continues well until the evening at 18.00 p.m. for the second ritual offering. This shows that the position of women are given a higher position than the men.

B. Obong tradition: A family responsibility One other tradition that is in unison with Ewuh tradition is Obong tradition. Obong tradition is a tradition performed by the Kalang as a form of family responsibility to the relatives who had died earlier. This tradition has the meaning of delivering, giving provision and reciting mantra, so that the relatives who have passed away can go smoothly to nirvana, which is believed to be a proper place for those who have died to live eternally. The obong tradition is executed twice after death that is at pitung dino (seven days after death) and mendak setunggal (one year after death). In addition to these days, the Kalang people have a more complete ritual of also praying for the death relative's Telung dino (three days), patang puluh dino (forty days) and nyatus dino (one hundred days). According to them, this tradition springs from the acculturation of the Hindu culture perpetrated by their ancestors. The obong tradition is recognized by the Kalang people as being almost the same as the Ngaben tradition in Bali, but the corpse in Bali, which is buried in the ground is replaced by a mantenan (wooden wedding doll) to symbolize the body. At the time of pitung dino (seven days) comemmmoration, the mother of the Kalang family would burn the sandangan (clothing) owned and used by the deceased, also in addition to burning a variety of sangu (supplies/provisions) from the deceased. This could be in the form of food, fruit, rice,, side dishes and money. The tradition is held in the at 12.00 noon, by commencing with a mantra reading ritual that is guided by a sonteng shaman. The sonteng shaman is an elderly woman who is believed to have the ability to communicate with the spirits of ancestors or spirits of people who have died. Then, this is proceeded with an obong ritual at about 13:00 p.m. until finished, where all sandangan (clothing) and sangu (supplies) are burned down and become ash. The obong tradition was carried out at the time of the deceased mendak setunggal (one year) of death.. This tradition has several levels of ritual that can be carried out with consideration of the economic capacity of each family. The slaughter of a male buffalo, for example, is carried out only for the complete obong tradition for economically capable families. In the tradition of buffalo slaughtering, the meat is cooked but the skin, legs, head, and tail are separated which will later be put together again for the ritual slametan (prayer of salvation). The buffalo animal, is believed to be a vehicle for the relatives who have died into nirvana. The buffalo has been a friend while working on the

Javanese rice fields. . At the time of buffalo slaughtering, the sonteng shaman will prepare a space to lay down the mantenan dolls. Along with the teng-teng (carrying of properties) ritual, there is an angon kebo (herded buffalo) ritual, which ended with a nyangoni ritual (giving supplies) from family members. The nyangoni ritual is the part where family members of the deceased would give ritual attendees money and food, after the ritual is closed by the sonteng shaman. The ritual finishes at around 22:00 p.m, where all of the teng-teng ritual equipment were returned to the kiwo (left) part of the room again for safe keeping. Although, it was time for the family to rest, there are also some family members who joined the lek-lek-an (not sleeping) ritual in order to be ready with the ewuh tradition, which starts at 03.00 a.m. the next day. At 03.00 a.m., all members of the families are waken up, to help the sonteng shaman, preparing all Uborampe (equipments etc.) offerings and the mantenan (wooden doll) for a similar ritual like the previous one done up to 20.00 p.m. After the obong ritual of burning all of the offerings, the left over mantenan, sandangan and sangu are placed in the omah (house) made of alang- alang (wild grass). Before the omah-omahan (house model) are burned and turned to ashes, the family would surround the house as a ritual. The very last part of the obong ritual is to throw coins in the burnt ashes for grabs by everyone present. That is the complete tradition of the capable Kalang family. Meanwhile, for the Kalang family with lower economic capabilities, they can replace the buffalo with goats, chickens, ducks or other livestock according to the economic capacity of the family. The buffalo angon (buffalo shepherding) ritual is not performed when the obong tradition is carried out. In the obong tradition, it is seen that the role of the woman (mother) if the husband or child dies, is for her to contact the sonteng shaman to determine the day for implementing the obong tradition.

LIMASAN: THE ROOM FOR THE KALANG PERFORMANCE

Acculturation in the Kalang tradition is the belief system implemented in rites equipped with sajen (offerings). Sajen is associated with the production of fruits, grains and vegetables, but the acculturation is very different from the offerings conducted by Hindu communities on the island of Bali. If the Balinese does their burning and worshipping ritual for the deceased on an outdoor field, the Kalang ritual is performed in a Limasan house. Limasan is a traditional Javanese building, whose rooftop features like a temple. The Limasan house's primary function is as a place to live and carry out all domestic activities, while the secondary function is as a place to carry out the social and cultural activities. With Kalang tradition performed within the Limasan house indicates that the Hindu culture and ancient Javanese culture have been combined, with some of the cultural elements of each group still maintained. The Hindu religion on the island of Bali shows the acceptance of the architecture of the temple as a place to carry out the Hindu ritual explicitly. This is why the temple is built in the yard of every Balinese house as one of the forms of their religious activity. Meanwhile, the Balinese house is used to carry out domestic and social activities. The Javanese Limasan house changes functions when carrying out the ewuh tradition or the obong tradition. As a house with two functions (Tjahjono, 1989), the Limasan House becomes sacred when it is used as a place to carry on the Kalang tradition. However, it is worthy to note that not all of the house spaces are sacred places. The spaces within a Limasan's house that become sacred and revered during the ewuh ritual are the pawon (kitchen), barn (a space for storing rice and food), banyu (space for storing water), furnace (space for cooking) and lawang ngarep (front door) rooms. These spaces are sacred because they are considered to be the places where the residents of the house are given their lives. During the obong ritual the rooms that are considered sacred are: the ruang kiwo (left side space), and ruang Andangan (the space in the Limasap house). In the ruang kiwo a mantenan (wooden doll) that symbolises the family members who have died is placed in there along with other offerings. The sonteng shaman's room is in front of the kiwo

room (left room), which functions as a space for the mantra (prayer) and nyangoni (giving provision) rituals for the deceased and living families. The next space is the ruang obong (obong space), which is located in the open yard of ngajeng (front yard). This space functions for the obong (burning) ritual of the mantenan and all offerings used as sangu (supplies) for the journey of the soul to nirvana (place after life).

WOMEN'S ABILITIES IN MANAGING THE KALANG TRADITION

Kalang tradition sees the role of a woman (mother of the family) as the person who dominates in their rituals and thus, gives a deep meaning about the role and abilities of women. The ability is not only in the traditional ritual but also in other routine activities. In the domestic activity, the mother is the center of the family mingling in between the husband and children. In the ritual activities, the mother takes on the role of the leader, who carries out the ewuh and obong ritual. In doing these activities, there are great responsibilities, which requires a good management from the women. The management is in three essential ways: 1) mind, 2) time, and 3) mental management. First, in mind management, women are required to have the ability to organise various things in a particular activity. The ability includes the cooking of the food used for the offering. After the food is ready, the women must have the ability to arrange the food well and have it ready as offerings for the ewuh tradition. To complete the ewuh ritual, these women will need to lead the family by reciting . Second, in time management, Kalang women need to organize their time well to do the various activities which they are responsible for, within a specified time agreed by the Kalang people. The ability to manage time is seen from when a mother has to do more than one activity at the same time. Not only should she function as the leader of the Kalang rituals, she must also become a mother who make her children and husband ready as active participants in the ritual. Third, in mental management, Kalang women are required to be healthy physically and mentally. A healthy and fit body will affect the mind and soul, so the Kalang tradition can be completed with all of the stages of the tradition, in its best quality women (Kabeer, 2005). While performing the traditional rituals, women mothers should do their domestic activity and social activities simultaneously well. From the activities of this tradition seems the power of a mother in carrying out her responsibilities with sincerity for family safety. Policies to support gender equality should pay attention to the equality of all human beings. The human way of thinking about gender equality needs to be emphasised and not just from the physical side. increasing the role of women in making decisions, it is necessary to develop policies that place women in the perspective of gender equality so that decisions that have the same responsibilities occur. (Widyastuti, 2011).

CONCLUSION

Maintenance of the ewuh and obong rituals of the Kalang people, where the women perform mantra prayers in a Limasan house, is one form of the acculturation that occurs between two cultures, i.e. the Javanese and the Indian people as a. Acculturation is not a matter of coercion but becomes a process toward perfection in life, complementary and mutually accepting differences, in order that people can live in peaceful togetherness. Thinking positively while learning a better way of life from other people's cultures such as that from India, have resulted the Javanese Kalang people to have a better life order. This article have discussed that the Kalang people believes it important to carryout a tradition taht gives respect to their ancestors, and by giving prayers of thanks for the protection they have received from their ancestors. Compliance in carrying out a Kalangtradition shows that the Kalang people gives attention to performing a good personality in life. Kalang people highly appreciates their women mothers who are found to, have a great responsibility to the husband and children to continue the Kalang traditions' rituals. In carrying out her responsibilities, a Kalang mother becomes an exemplary person, who gives a positive impact on the development of a child's life. The way a mother woke up from 3.00 a.m. and perform the ewuh and obong ritual up to around 20.00 or 22.00,

would have inspired a child on how to practice or preserve the Kalang tradition of women as leaders. Seeing the woman mother becomes the centre of attention in a child's own Limasan's house, the child can truly appreciate the power his/her mother has in the tradition.

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¹ The Power of *Kalang* Woman in Gender Equality
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Abstract: Kalang is a Javanese sub-ethnic within the Kalang tradition, which is an acculturation of ancient Javanese culture with Hindu culture coming from India. In everyday life, the Kalang women as a mother have a central role in the household activity of being responsible to the husband and children's well-being. This cultural acculturation still exists in the lives of the Kalang people in Kendal, Central Java, Indonesia. In tradition, Kalang women have power in her position as a housewife, not in using her physical strength, but to demonstrate the ability to think, manage time and control emotions in carrying out the three household activities of 1) domestic, 2) tradition, and 3) social activity. In today's modern era, gender equality becomes the central talk of how the Kalang society places women within a family that is judged not through the material she obtains, but by her responsibilities. Through a deductive paradigm with ethnographic techniques, the research finds how powerful a mother is in managing the family. because she succeeded in showing her role as head of the family, thus perfecting the role of men also as breadwinner, and in making her family life stable by continuously upholding the Kalang tradition.

Key words: *ewuh, Kalang, mantenana, obong, sonteng*

Abstrak: Kelompok orang Kalang, merupakan sub-etnis Jawa dengan tradisi Kalang yang merupakan akulturasi dari budaya tradisional Jawa kuno dengan budaya Hindu yang datang dari India. Dalam kehidupan sehari-hari, perempuan Kalang sebagai seorang ibu memiliki peran yang central dalam aktivitas rumah tangga, peran tersebut merupakan tanggung jawab kepada suami dan anak-anak. Akulturasi budaya tersebut masih eksis dilaksanakan dalam kehidupan orang Kalang di Kabupaten Kendal, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia. Dalam tradisi Kalang perempuan memiliki keperkasaan dalam posisinya sebagai ibu rumah tangga. Keperkasaan bukan berarti kekuatan fisik yang dapat disalahgunakan untuk kekerasan, namun keperkasaan menunjukkan kemampuan olah pikir, olah waktu dan olah mental dalam melaksanakan tiga aktivitas rumah tangga yaitu aktivitas 1) domestik, 2) tradisi dan 3) sosial. Di era modern saat ini, dimana kesetaraan gender menjadi issue utama setiap kali membicarakan masalah perempuan, kelompok orang Kalang memposisikan perempuan (ibu) menjadi posisi sentral dalam keluarga yang memiliki kesetaraan gender melalui tanggung jawabnya dan bukan melalui materi yang dihasilkan. Melalui paradigma deduktif dengan teknik etnografi, ditemukan makna seorang ibu yang perkasa dalam mengelola keluarga. Tulisan ini adalah hasil penelitian yang dilakukan pada ibu sebagai sentral keluarga yang sukses menunjukkan perannya sebagai pilar keluarga karena menyempurnakan peran laki-laki sebagai pencari nafkah, sehingga menyejukkan kehidupan keluarganya dengan secara terus menerus menjaga tradisi Kalang.

Kata kunci: ewuh, Kalang, mantenan, obong, sonteng

INTRODUCTION

Women, in her position as a mother and husband's companion has an active role in maintaining the sustainability of married life. The responsibility that most women have is aside from the responsibility of being the breadwinner of the family. Being a 21st century women who can have equal opportunities with men, there are questions arising about whether women is given the position as heads of their families.

Although the notion of gender is an inherent trait of socially and culturally constructed from men and women (Mansour 1997) with men considered mighty and rational, while women are considered gentle, beautiful, emotional and maternal, in certain instances, it is the women's nature to be interchangeable in positioning themselves to be more dominant or not than men (Umar, 1999). Gender equality has a recognition for women to be in

positions that replace men's domination in a family because women can have equal responsibilities as men, although physically, women are considered weaker in physical strength.

The nature of women in the context of traditional life has several different meanings in each ethnic. Yet, it can also be generalized that women have the same responsibility of being a mother and housewife to any family. In Indonesia, the Javanese is a group of people who have the largest ethnic of having itself spread throughout the Indonesian archipelago. It is interesting to note that one of the sub ethnic group of the Java people is the Kalang group (Abdul, 2015), which carries out a different tradition on how women are positioned in their families.

The existence of this Kalang group has been officially recognized by the Javanese Sultan, Hamengku Buwana VI in *Serat Angger-angger* (*angger-angger* document) in 1865. In *Serat Angger-angger*, it is mentioned that the Kalang are brothers of the Javanese who lived side by side in the Islamic Mataram Kingdom (Susilantini, 2014, p.52). In the document, there is no detailed explanation of what is meant by Kalang women, who are powerful. Powerful is not explained clearly in what way. However, in the quotation mentioned about the disputes a husband and wife of a Kalang family experinced in chapter 24, which states: "If the people of Kalang in the Sultanate are married, then the men will have a more powerful position than the women. On the contrary, if the people living around the edge of Gajahmati are married, the women will be more powerful." In the document, it is informed that firstly, the Kalang people are those who live and become *Abdi Dalem* (relatives) in the Sultan's palace. Secondly, Kalang people are ordinary people living on the edge of the river *Gajah Mati*. These people living at the edge of the river are considered sub-ethnic Javanese people. They have a strong, mighty, and harsh characteristics. Although these words are claimed to be equivalent to showing something that is considered to have more power - in this context, it does not mean that these people have physical strength, but instead they have the positive power of sustaining a family togetherness.

In the Keraton or the people living in the Mataram Kingdom, people see the women as positive members of the general Kalang society. The *Serat Angger-angger*, issued by Sultan Hamengku Buwana VI (1865) has acknowledged the power of Kalang women despite having a different tradition from the Sultanate of Java which then became a role model for the *priyayi*, which is a term for the Javanese people who are considered to be in a higher class of education as they show better behaviour and politeness rather than most

common people. Currently, in the 21st century, the power of the female Kalang is said to be still relevant. In the life of the Kalang group, who are within a middle and lower hierarchy rather than the high class of the Mataram Kingdom, some Kalang women still practice the traditions they inherited from their ancestors.

Kalang culture is the result of the acculturation of the traditional Javanese culture that still accommodates with animism and dynamism with the Hindu tradition of India. The openness of the Javanese to new traditions and cultures, like the welcome for Indian Hindu shows that the Javanese people does not show resistance to other cultures (Khalil, 2008). The new tradition that is absorbed and accepted as an update to the beliefs of animism and dynamism provides an insight into the traditional life of ancient Javanese society. Kalang women in reality is not different from other women in Indonesia with regards to their lives in domestic, social and traditional activities. However, the Kalang women follows through several traditions that are routinely and periodically done, in order to give thanks for their safety and comfortable lives they and the family are receiving up to now.

Having the Kalang tradition implemented in every individual family makes almost everyone in the group have a specific purpose of following the Kalang tradition. In their individual family tradition, the Kalang people make time to show their thanks for a successful life stage, through the manifestations of *sajen* or offerings. In the big family tradition, they show their thanks in the show of a good relationship between family members with their creator and ancestors who have provided protection, happiness and prosperity through their yearly *ewuh* commemoration.

In the Kalang family tradition, there is a responsibility to bring their relatives or parents who have died to be at their best for the Great Creator, by giving magical prayers through a burning ritual known as *obong*. In this ritual, it is the Kalang women that have the significant role in practicing the ritual, and reciting the mantra or prayers for the hope of a better life for the deceased and the family that are left behind.

WOMEN IN GENDER VS LOCAL WISDOM PERSPECTIVES

Gender equality is a movement that wants to recognize women's contribution to various aspects that are usually considered to only belonging to men. The existence of gender equality have increased the participation of

women in various aspects of male-dominated activities, that consequently there are more various activities that are dominated by women (Bonney, 2007). Women with various abilities that are equivalent to men's abilities begin to appear without awkwardness, and are done well. The issue of women having an equal position with the men is not the ability to make women physically dominant and become manly, instead women are made dominant by still maintaining their feminine characteristics.

Gender issues originally positions itself as a movement that raises the dignity of women in the eyes of men. The movement tries to emancipate women in various aspects of life that only men usually do. In issues of gender equality, most of the time people try to show the differences between men and women through their social roles, behaviors, duties, rights and functions that are imposed on women and men. Generally, gender issues arise as a result of a condition that indicates a gender gap, which deals with the systems and structures experienced by society (Herawati, 2013).

A gender gap usually arises when a condition between men and women who begins to compare with the value of the income they earn. It has become a factor for gender gap, because there is the demand for the women to be equivalent to men in terms of the amount of money that can be obtained by the women. Herawati (2007) informs that a growing gender concept results from the social functioning of each individual that deals with new, more personal thoughts that tend to override the main task of what a man or woman should do. In other words, the concept or ideology of gender makes people fragmented with the meaning of man versus woman. In this case, women will try to be equal with men and may forget their basic nature as women, who provides assistance in the background. The gender equality concept has thus, an impact that reduces an individual's responsibility, which leads to injustice in men and women's resources in terms of carrying out their responsibilities, recipient of wages and the recognition of their respective contributions in society. However, if looking at the local culture in Indonesia, women are positioned already with men in equal portions of responsibility and recognition of their respective contributions, while the differences in wages do not trouble the relationship matter in terms of economics (Herawati, 2007).

Gender equality in the Indonesian culture is, therefore, not about what women should be able to do in carrying out men's work but what women could do in complementing men's work. Most Indonesian women will position themselves for jobs that are not difficult and do not require physical

power, thereby, it means that whatever job they undertake, they do them in support of their male partners. The same kind of responsibility occurs if women or men are given different job portions. The Indonesian cultural sphere of justified equality for both men and women shows that culture becomes a grip to establish proportionally. Indeed, the roots of injustice that have occurred so far may derive from the practice of policies and programs of development that is more prominent in men, and where women's position is still associated with domestic activities (Marhaeni, 2008). However, if we look at some local wisdom that positions women in equal proportion to men, in Indonesia, it is found that there has been a gender equality that has been believed to be a gender-based division of responsibilities in folklores such as the Goddess Dewi Sri story.

Women like Dewi Sri has been shown in the Indonesian culture as having an essential role for providing a source of life for the sustenance of all human's lives. Dewi Sri is a goddess believed by the Javanese-Indonesians, as the one who provides the force for rice fields to continually grow. With continuous rice available for Java citizens, due to the blessings from Goddess Dewi Sri, it entails that the Javanese people will continue to survive as rice becomes the main staple of food for the Javanese people's lives. Dewi Sri is not only the Goddess of rice, she is also the agriculture Goddess and Goddess of fertility. The glorification and worship of Dewi Sri for the successful crops of the Javanese and Balinese rice fields has been evident since the pre-Hindu times to pre-Islamic times on the island of Java. As a Goddess, Dewi Sri is one who is considered or believed to be a subtle human being, who is in charge of nature and the existence of men. Dewi Sri is not only a protector of birth and life, she is also the one in control for food, especially rice, as the main staple food for the Javanese and Balinese society. In the Majapahit Kingdom, Dewi Sri is married to Sadana. Sadana in the Javanese myth is someone who gives way to people's lives' meanings. Thus, with Sadana, Dewi Sri makes possible for people's lives to achieve the dream of living a comfortable life with the abundance of rice as the main food for human's survival.

The local myth of Bathari Dewi Sri and Bathara Sadana, who is the God and Goddess in charge of giving good fortune to humanity has influenced the writing of the Javanese numerology, or calculation of the *Mangsa Saddha*. *Mangsa Saddha*, which is the counting days of special Javanese events is a way of finding the best day for acquiring the best prosperity someone can have. The myth of Dewi Sri shows that women can have an equal position with men in different job portions. With the ability for both Dewi Sri and Saddana as wife and husband to control human life from birth, to control food, to

control happiness and prosperity, they have become role models for the Javanese people. Having the woman (Sri) working side by side with her man (Sadana) becomes an example of how people's household can achieve happiness and prosperity, in addition to a woman's responsibility of giving birth to children in a family (Jajang, 2014). Women's performance and interactiveness in the Javanese society is, thus defined by their immediate society. It is this kind reference that makes Javanese women comfortably continue to do what is deemed customary for women in order to be positioned in where they are (Rohmana, 2014).

The Indonesian archipelago, which has many tribes has provided specific characteristics that indicate people's identities. In identity, there is a show of distinction among the several Indonesian tribes that have unique culture, language, and tradition that are inherited from their ancestors. There is, however, a similarity that arises from the various tribes in Indonesia and the position of men in general; i.e. the patriarchal system of the society, which assumes that men have a higher position than women (Sakina, 2017). In the Javanese culture of the 18th century, however, women in the general society and the government of the Mataram kingdom, is shown to be a *kanca wingking* (a friend in the back part of the house), with responsibilities of becoming a friend to their husbands in managing household affairs. These affairs are the taking care of the children, doing the cooking, and washing the clothes of the family.

Although women are equally managers with their men or husbands in their own households, a number of Javanese expressions have tended to demean the women's importance. A Javanese expression, which states that a wife must have the cleverness to *manak, macak, masak*, which means that a wife should be able to give birth and have the cleverness to take care of their children, know how to dress them up well, and cook deliciously well also gives identity to how and where women are positioned as being submissive to the men in their households. This is the reason why later on, in the ruling empire of the island of Java, people began to think of the differences between men and women as following the patriarchal definition of the world's men versus women's position. However, the Javanese expression for women to go to *Neraka Katut, Suwarga Nunut*, which means when entering hell the women got carried in, and when entering paradise the women follows with the men ascertains that women have the equal opportunity as their men to go to either hell or heaven. This means that women do not necessarily become in contradiction but have the distinction to complement the men in order to enable the formation of a harmonious relationship in the family to build an

orderly society. The gender equality between Javanese women and men is also confirmed in the Javanese expression of *sak iyeg sak eka kapti*, which means that as human beings, the Javanese people are assigned with equal responsibilities.

The similarity of responsibility between the masculine and feminine that makes a balance on each Javanese individual gives the possibility for each human being to develop their own personality optimally (Uyun, 2012). Just like the concept of androgyny, where men not only develop aggressiveness and strength in order to be seen as masculine characters, they are only complete as a human being if they also develop their feminine characters when needed. Consequently, in similar terms, women should develop their feminine characteristics but also develop their masculine rationality and independentness. The role of androgyny in the Javanese culture, therefore, is not only to demand the equal rights between men and women but also to develop themselves into the required character when needed. A balance between masculinity and femininity is a good thing to have in order to avoid being forced into different activities required by responsibilities brought by gender differences (Kaplan, 1979).

KALANG TRADITION: AN ACCULTURATION OF ANCIENT JAVANESE AND HINDU INDIA

Acculturation is a social process in society that can create new cultures that benefit people's lives. The process of acculturation of two cultures takes on a long process because there are psychological changes that occur between two or more cultural groups. At the group level, there are also changes met in the social structure and cultural practices (Berry, 2005). Social and cultural changes also occurred in the Kalang Javanese group who had settled in Java before accepting the Indian's culture. The arrival of the Indian people brings with them their beliefs, hierarchies, and government systems that later mingle with the ancient Javanese society (Muslimin, 2012). The presence of the Indian nation affected the social changes of the ancient Javanese cultural systems, religion, community organisations, knowledge systems, existing tools of technology and art. The melting and reciprocal cultural blend created a new culture known as the Kalang tradition.

Kalang people are found in Kendal district, of Central Java. Kalang is a tradition, that existed through the process of acculturation between native Javanese and the Hindu culture that came from India around the 2nd century

AD. The original inhabitants before the 2nd century AD had the belief of animism and dynamism. Although it has been a long time since the 2nd century AD until the development of technology and information in the 20th century AD, Kalang groups still carry on the traditions passed on from their ancestors. These traditions include the tradition of *Ewuh* and *Obong* tradition. These two traditions are periodic even though they have embraced Islam as a way of life. The understanding of the Kalang group of religions and traditions has strengthened its faith to carry out the *Ewuh* and *Obong* traditions, which are celebrated in every Javanese family.

A. *Ewuh* tradition: A ritual of gratitude to the ancestors

The *ewuh* tradition is a tradition carried out by the Kalang people within each Javanese nuclear family, which consists of a father, mother, son and/or daughter, who is in one house. The family carries out the tradition of *ewuh* as a form of gratitude to their ancestors. From observations and interview, it is found that this tradition was actually addressed to the *Demang*, who was an ancestral village leader. The tradition is carried out every *weton* (birth day) of the first *Demang*, which was born on Tuesday *Wage*, while the second *Demang* was born on Friday *Wage*.

The calculation of the *ewuh* day tradition is every two times of every seven months and two times of every five months, so that in one year will be held four times of *ewuh* tradition. The implementation of *ewuh* tradition is the form of offerings, which consists of a combination of: 1) *Kebon* (garden), 2) *Makaryo* (work), and 3) *Peken* (market). The three sources become one in a *pawon* (kitchen) room to be given a *mantra* (prayer), that is recited by the mother of a family. All of these are processed and arranged on *anamben* (bed). In the offerings there are: 1) *Pawon* (kitchen) furnace; 2) *lumbung* (rice granary); 3) *Lawang* (main door); 4) *Pawon* room (kitchen); and 5) *Gentong banyu* (a container mad from clay that stores water). After the mother finished saying her *mantra*, the offerings can be eaten by the family members or anyone who wants to enjoy the food. As can be learned here, the *ewuh* tradition, places a woman (the mother) to be agile in carrying out and preparing all offerings ranging from the selection of the ingredients, preparations for the cooking of the meals, , arrangement of the cooked meals, and reciting the mantras.

Carrying out rituals and saying the mantras to give peace to the spirits are done by the mother of the Kalang family. The power of a mother is seen starting at dawn at around 03.00 a.m, where the whole series of the *ewuh* tradition started with the husband and children still sleeping. The tradition

continues well until the evening at 18.00 p.m. for the second ritual offering. This shows that the position of women are given a higher position than the men.

B. *Obong* tradition: A family responsibility

One other tradition that is in unison with *Ewuh* tradition is *Obong* tradition. *Obong* tradition is a tradition performed by the Kalang as a form of family responsibility to the relatives who had died earlier. This tradition has the meaning of delivering, giving provision and reciting *mantra*, so that the relatives who have passed away can go smoothly to nirvana, which is believed to be a proper place for those who have died to live eternally. The *obong* tradition is executed twice after death that is at *pitung dino* (seven days after death) and *mendak setunggal* (one year after death). In addition to these days, the Kalang people have a more complete ritual of also praying for the death relative's *Telung dino* (three days), *patang puluh dino* (forty days) and *nyatus dino* (one hundred days). According to them, this tradition springs from the acculturation of the Hindu culture perpetrated by their ancestors. The *obong* tradition is recognized by the Kalang people as being almost the same as the *Ngaben* tradition in Bali, but the corpse in Bali, which is buried in the ground is replaced by a *mantenan* (wooden wedding doll) to symbolize the body.

At the time of *pitung dino* (seven days) commemoration, the mother of the Kalang family would burn the *sandangan* (clothing) owned and used by the deceased, also in addition to burning a variety of *sangu* (supplies/provisions) from the deceased. This could be in the form of food, fruit, rice, side dishes and money. The tradition is held in the at 12.00 noon, by commencing with a *mantra* reading ritual that is guided by a *sonteng* shaman. The *sonteng* shaman is an elderly woman who is believed to have the ability to communicate with the spirits of ancestors or spirits of people who have died. Then, this is proceeded with an *obong* ritual at about 13:00 p.m. until finished, where all *sandangan* (clothing) and *sangu* (supplies) are burned down and become ash.

The *obong* tradition was carried out at the time of the deceased *mendak setunggal* (one year) of death. This tradition has several levels of ritual that can be carried out with consideration of the economic capacity of each family. The slaughter of a male buffalo, for example, is carried out only for the complete *obong* tradition for economically capable families. In the tradition of buffalo slaughtering, the meat is cooked but the skin, legs, head, and tail are separated which will later be put together again for the ritual *slametan* (prayer of salvation). The buffalo animal, is believed to be a vehicle for the relatives who

have died into nirvana. The buffalo has been a friend while working on the Javanese rice fields. . At the time of buffalo slaughtering, the *sonteng* shaman will prepare a space to lay down the *mantenan* dolls. Along with the *teng-teng* (carrying of properties) ritual, there is an *angon kebo* (herded buffalo) ritual, which ended with a *nyangoni* ritual (giving supplies) from family members. The *nyangoni* ritual is the part where family members of the deceased would give ritual attendees money and food, after the ritual is closed by the *sonteng* shaman. The ritual finishes at around 22:00 p.m, where all of the *teng-teng* ritual equipment were returned to the *kiwo* (left) part of the room again for safe keeping. Although, it was time for the family to rest, there are also some family members who joined the *lek-lekan* (not sleeping) ritual in order to be ready with the *ewuh* tradition, which starts at 03.00 a.m. the next day.

At 03.00 a.m., all members of the families are waken up, to help the *sonteng* shaman, preparing all *Uborampe* (equipments etc.) offerings and the *mantenan* (wooden doll) for a similar ritual like the previous one done up to 20.00 p.m. After the *obong* ritual of burning all of the offerings, the left over *mantenan*, *sandangan* and *sangu* are placed in the *omah* (house) made of *alang-alang* (wild grass). Before the *omah-omahan* (house model) are burned and turned to ashes, the family would surround the house as a ritual. The very last part of the *obong* ritual is to throw coins in the burnt ashes for grabs by everyone present. That is the complete tradition of the capable Kalang family. Meanwhile, for the Kalang family with lower economic capabilities, they can replace the buffalo with goats, chickens, ducks or other livestock according to the economic capacity of the family. The buffalo *angon* (buffalo shepherding) ritual is not performed when the *obong* tradition is carried out. In the *obong* tradition, it is seen that the role of the woman (mother) if the husband or child dies, is for her to contact the *sonteng* shaman to determine the day for implementing the *obong* tradition.

LIMASAN: THE ROOM FOR THE KALANG PERFORMANCE

Acculturation in the Kalang tradition is the belief system implemented in rites equipped with *sajen* (offerings). *Sajen* is associated with the production of fruits, grains and vegetables, but the acculturation is very different from the offerings conducted by Hindu communities on the island of Bali. If the Balinese does their burning and worshipping ritual for the deceased on an outdoor field, the Kalang ritual is performed in a *Limasan* house. *Limasan* is a traditional Javanese building, whose rooftop features like a temple. The

Limasan house's primary function is as a place to live and carry out all domestic activities, while the secondary function is as a place to carry out the social and cultural activities. With Kalang tradition performed within the *Limasan* house indicates that the Hindu culture and ancient Javanese culture have been combined, with some of the cultural elements of each group still maintained. The Hindu religion on the island of Bali shows the acceptance of the architecture of the temple as a place to carry out the Hindu ritual explicitly. This is why the temple is built in the yard of every Balinese house as one of the forms of their religious activity. Meanwhile, the Balinese house is used to carry out domestic and social activities.

The Javanese *Limasan* house changes functions when carrying out the *ewuh* tradition or the *obong* tradition. As a house with two functions (Tjahjono, 1989), the *Limasan* House becomes sacred when it is used as a place to carry on the Kalang tradition. However, it is worthy to note that not all of the house spaces are sacred places. The spaces within a *Limasan's* house that become sacred and revered during the *ewuh* ritual are the *pawon* (kitchen), barn (a space for storing rice and food), *banyu* (space for storing water), furnace (space for cooking) and *lawang ngarep* (front door) rooms. These spaces are sacred because they are considered to be the places where the residents of the house are given their lives. During the *obong* ritual the rooms that are considered sacred are: the *ruang kiwo* (left side space), and *ruang Andangan* (the space in the *Limasan* house). In the *ruang kiwo* a *mantenan* (wooden doll) that symbolises the family members who have died is placed in there along with other offerings. The *sonteng* shaman's room is in front of the *kiwo* room (left room), which functions as a space for the *mantra* (prayer) and *nyangoni* (giving provision) rituals for the deceased and living families. The next space is the *ruang obong* (*obong* space), which is located in the open yard of *ngajeng* (front yard). This space functions for the *obong* (burning) ritual of the *mantenan* and all offerings used as *sangu* (supplies) for the journey of the soul to nirvana (place after life).

WOMEN'S ABILITIES IN MANAGING THE KALANG TRADITION

Kalang tradition sees the role of a woman (mother of the family) as the person who dominates in their rituals and thus, gives a deep meaning about the role and abilities of women. The ability is not only in the traditional ritual but also in other routine activities. In the domestic activity, the mother is the center of the family mingling in between the husband and children. In the

ritual activities, the mother takes on the role of the leader, who carries out the *ewuh* and *obong* ritual. In doing these activities, there are great responsibilities, which requires a good management from the women. The management is in three essential ways: 1) mind, 2) time, and 3) mental management.

First, in mind management, women are required to have the ability to organise various things in a particular activity. The ability includes the cooking of the food used for the offering. After the food is ready, the women must have the ability to arrange the food well and have it ready as offerings for the *ewuh* tradition. To complete the *ewuh* ritual, these women will need to lead the family by reciting.

Second, in time management, Kalang women need to organize their time well to do the various activities which they are responsible for, within a specified time agreed by the Kalang people. The ability to manage time is seen from when a mother has to do more than one activity at the same time. Not only should she function as the leader of the Kalang rituals, she must also become a mother who make her children and husband ready as active participants in the ritual.

Third, in mental management, Kalang women are required to be healthy physically and mentally. A healthy and fit body will affect the mind and soul, so the Kalang tradition can be completed with all of the stages of the tradition, in its best quality women (Kabeer, 2005).

While performing the traditional rituals, women mothers should do their domestic activity and social activities simultaneously well. From the activities of this tradition seems the power of a mother in carrying out her responsibilities with sincerity for family safety. Policies to support gender equality should pay attention to the equality of all human beings. The human way of thinking about gender equality needs to be emphasised and not just from the physical side. increasing the role of women in making decisions, it is necessary to develop policies that place women in the perspective of gender equality so that decisions that have the same responsibilities occur. (Widyastuti, 2011).

CONCLUSION

Maintenance of the *ewuh* and *obong* rituals of the Kalang people, where the women perform mantra prayers in a Limasan house, is one form of the

acculturation that occurs between two cultures, i.e. the Javanese and the Indian people as a. Acculturation is not a matter of coercion but becomes a process toward perfection in life, complementary and mutually accepting differences, in order that people can live in peaceful togetherness. Thinking positively while learning a better way of life from other people's cultures such as that from India, have resulted the Javanese Kalang people to have a better life order. This article has discussed that the Kalang people believes it important to carry out a tradition that gives respect to their ancestors, and by giving prayers of thanks for the protection they have received from their ancestors. Compliance in carrying out a Kalang tradition shows that the Kalang people gives attention to performing a good personality in life. Kalang people highly appreciates their women mothers who are found to, have a great responsibility to the husband and children to continue the Kalang traditions' rituals. In carrying out her responsibilities, a Kalang mother becomes an exemplary person, who gives a positive impact on the development of a child's life. The way a mother woke up from 3.00 a.m. and perform the *ewuh* and *obong* ritual up to around 20.00 or 22.00, would have inspired a child on how to practice or preserve the Kalang tradition of women as leaders. Seeing the woman mother becomes the centre of attention in a child's own *Limasan's* house, the child can truly appreciate the power his/her mother has in the tradition.

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